DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 311 636 EC 221 042

AUTHOR Kojima, Yoko
TITLE Strategies To Improve Socio-Vocational Integration of Disabled Women in Japan.
PUB DATE Sep 88
NOTE 11p.; Paper presented at the World Conference of Rehabilitation International (16th, Tokyo, Japan, September 5-9, 1988).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adults; *Disabilities; Employment; Employment Opportunities; *Females; Foreign Countries; *Public Policy; *Social Integration; *Sociocultural Patterns; Socioeconomic Status
IDENTIFIERS *Japan

ABSTRACT

In conjunction with a research project of the International Labor Office's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, 184 Japanese women with disabilities were surveyed. The survey gathered data concerning the women's education, occupations, income sources, interests, and occupational hardships and frustrations. The major strategies suggested by the Japanese disabled women to expand the socio-vocational integration of disabled women were identified as follows: (1) terminate prejudice to ability of the disabled by social education; (2) strengthen the independency of the disabled women through a self-help movement; (3) produce more employment opportunities for disabled women; (4) foster further social functioning abilities of disabled women; (5) create a better physical environment; (6) upgrade qualitative and quantitative personal assistance; (7) use mass media to upgrade intellectual level of disabled women; (8) provide useful information for independent living; (9) promote more participation of women in political decision making; and (10) establish more community based rehabilitation facilities. This paper discusses further the obstacles and promoting forces to enforce these stated strategies in the psycho-social reality of present Japan. It is concluded that disabled women in Japan have many unsolved problems in achieving the social goal of participation and equality, but they rather equally enjoy social life with little discrepancy in social status. (JDD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED311636

STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE SOCIO-VOCATIONAL INTEGRATION OF DISABLED WOMEN IN JAPAN -VIEWS OBTAINED FROM THE RESEARCH PROPOSED BY THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE

Y. KOJIMA, PROFESSOR, JAPAN WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY, JAPAN

Corresponding with the social campaign in the U.N. Decade for Women (1976-1985) and the U.N. Decade of People with Disabilities (1983-1992), the awakening of a self-help concept for Japanese disabled women rapidly arose in the early 1980's in Japan.

Socio-vocational integration of the disabled women was pioneered by professional women regardless of the severity of the disabilities and the marital status.

When the author attempted to research the life style, problems and aspirations proposed by the ILO-Bangkok through interviews, those who volunteered their cooperation to the research team were the disabled women working in a variety of self-help associations for women who were blind, deaf, had physical disabilities, epilepsy, rheumatoid arthritis, mental retardation, etc. (N=137)

The major strategies suggested by the Japanese disabled women to expand the socio-vocational integration of disabled women were identified as follows: 1) terminate prejudice to ability of the disabled by social education; 2) strengthen the independency of the disabled women through self-help movement; 3) produce more employment opportunities to disabled women; 4) foster further social functioning abilities of disabled women; 5) create better physical environment; 6) qualitative and quantitative upgrading of personal assistance; 7) use of mass media to upgrade intellectual level of disabled women; 8) effective provision of useful information for independent living; 9) promote more participation of women in the political decision making; and 10) require more community based rehabilitation facilities.

This paper discusses further the obstacles and promoting forces to enforce these stated strategies in the psycho-social reality of present Japan.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Yoko Kojima

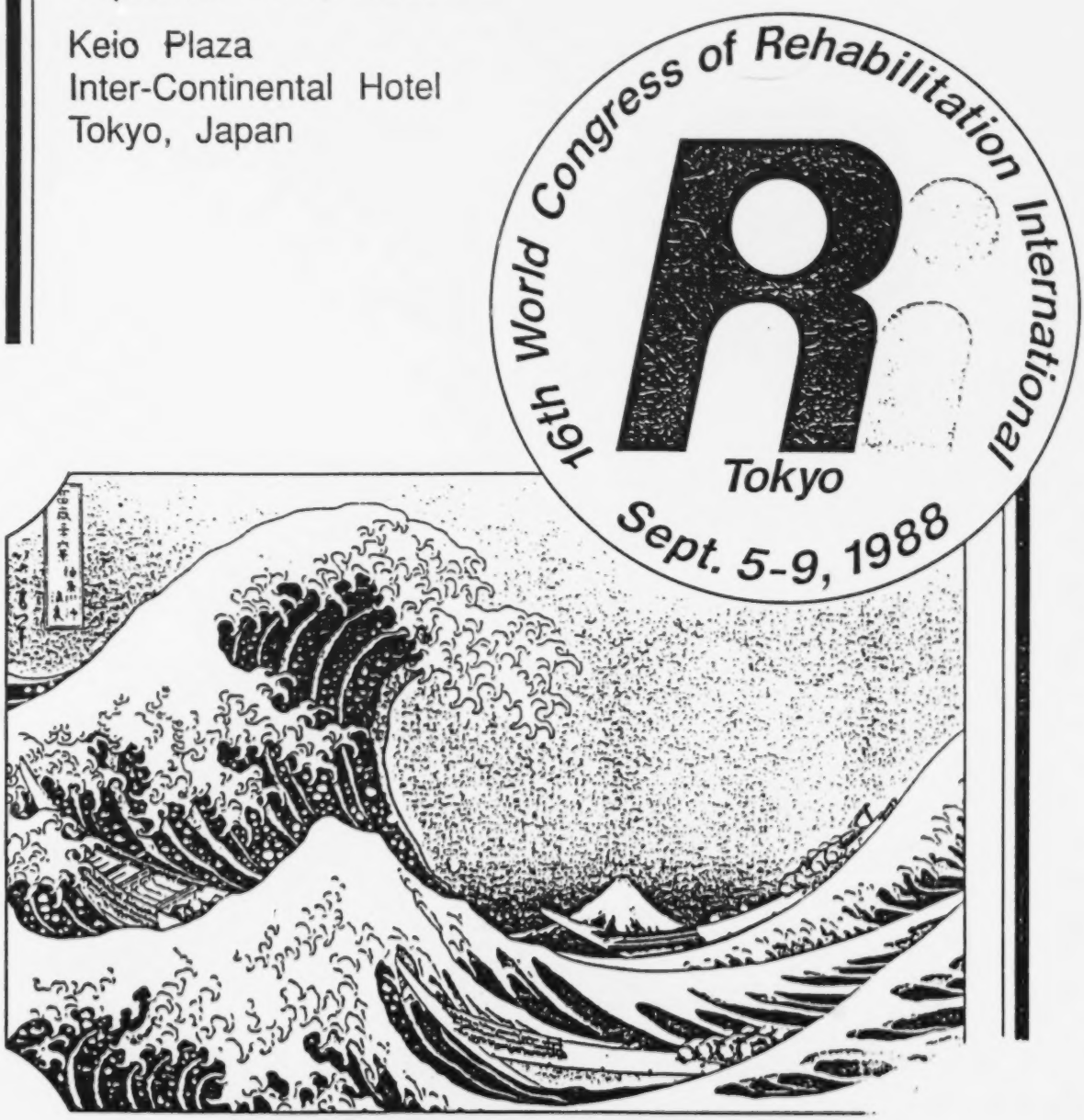
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

EC 231042

16th World Congress of Rehabilitation International

September 5-9, 1988

Keio Plaza
Inter-Continental Hotel
Tokyo, Japan



ABSTRACTS II

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FULL PAPER

Strategies to Improve Socio-Vocational Integration of Disabled Women in Japan

(Views obtained from the research proposed by the International Labor Office)

Y. Kojima, Ph.D.

Professor, Japan Women's University
8-1, 2-chome Mejirodai, Bankyo-ku, Tokyo 112, Japan

Having the largest disabled population and dense clustering, third world countries in Asia and the Pacific Region provide a unique environment for disabled women under unique religious and cultural orientation. Historically the status of women was not always high in this region. Disabilities moreover proved to have a double negative affect over the status of the disabled women in Asia. Because of the circumstances of women who were disabled, the International Labor Office (ILO) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific initiated a research project to identify how the disabled women in Asia cope with their severe social and cultural barriers to pursue their goal of socio-vocational integration under the given cultural circumstances. Six countries: Fiji, India, Japan, Pakistan, the Philippines and Thailand were selected as sample countries for this research project.

Japan is an exception because of its level of industrialization and urbanization, but Japan participated in the research project to indicate the women's situation in the developed part of the Asian and Pacific regions.

1. Profile of Japanese Disabled Women Surveyed

Using a translated form of the unified questionnaire, Japanese disabled women in the following categories were interviewed, and if the interviews were unavailable then they mailed in their form. The categories are physically, visually and auditory disabled, mentally retarded, epileptic and disabled by rheumatoid arthritis. The number of questionnaires completed was 184.

Among the 184, 79.5% were identified as profoundly disabled women according to Japan's nationwide classification scale.

26.6% had higher education, Junior College and over, compared with the rate of women who received higher education of the total woman population in Japan, that is 35.3%, this sample group is not necessarily seen as a lower educated group.

Ninetyfour (51%) of those interviewed had occupations. About half of those who do not work are full-time housewives.

The type of work varies: 49% of the employed population were in the open competitive labor market; 25% were self employed, and the majority of this type were blind women who run independent massage clinics alone or with their husband. A small number of the profoundly physically disabled and the mentally retarded women were working in small voluntary workshops for the disabled.

With regard to income, the survey identified two major sources for disabled women. One is social security benefits and the other is earnings and salaries. In Japan only those who are in category I (most severely disabled among the six categories) and II, are entitled to receive non-contributory "Disabled Basic Pension". If a disabled person ,and/or the person who has legal responsibility to support the disabled individual, are over a certain standard, the disabled individual will lose eligibility as a pension recipient.

In the sample group, 65% have been receiving pensions. Also, 121 women out of the 184 had some kind of earnings and many of them received both pensions and earnings. The amount of gross labor cost (earnings) varied from ¥2,000-¥3,000 (=US$20) up to about ¥250,000 (=US$2,000) a month per person. The Japanese disabled women surveyed are engaged in various types of work in the professional field. Regardless of the severity of their disability, the physically and visually disabled women tend to achieve professional work such as government officials, administrators, teachers, self-employed, practitioners of massage, technical skill instructors. Mentally handicapped and the multiple disabled tend to work at unskilled trade under the supervision of family or other people. (See Table 1)

Disabled women generally are excited at the thought of marriage, family living, having children and hobbies (the study of music, flower arranging caligraphy, etc.), friendships, working, volunteer service and health maintenance.

Table 1 Occupation

Occupational level \ Disability	visually Disabled	Auditory Disabled	Disability in Movenent	Total (sub total)	(%)
1. Managerial				(2)	(3.0)
Workshop Director			1	1	
English School Teacher			1	1	
2. Administrative				(2)	(3.0)
National Government Officer			1	1	
Local Government Officer			1	1	
3. Professional				(31)	(47.0)
Librarian	1			1	
High School Teacher	1			1	
Piano Coach	1			1	
Massage Instructor	1			1	
Massagist	17			17	
Mobility Trainer for the Blind	1		1	2	
Counselor to the Deaf		3		3	
Nurse			1	1	
Editor of a Journal			1	1	
Vocational Skill Trainer			1	1	
Teacher of Dress Making			2	2	
4. Semi Professional				(18)	(27.0)
Book Keeper		4	5	9	
Word Processor	3		1	4	
Switch Board Operator			1	1	
Braill Instructor			1	1	
Tracing of Graphic Design			1	1	
Peer Counselor			2	2	
5. Skilled				(8)	(12.1)
Sales			2	2	
Sewing	1		2	3	
Tailoring		2	1	3	
6. Unskilled				(5)	(7.6)
Bench Work for Assembling		1	2	3	
Collection of Discarded Materials			2	2	
Total	26	10	30	66	(100.0)

On the other hand, disabled women find life very hard. 94 of the 184 listed 127 hardships in their occupational life. The major complaint being lack of understanding of their disability by superiors and fellow workers. Second is the fear of aggravating their physical condition with their hard working life. Third is frustration caused by their own physical limitation and their aspirations for their life goal or achievement level of work and life.

2. Recommendations for Practical Action to be Taken to Promote Integration of Disabled Women

The disabled women have made the following ten suggestions to realize their fullest involvement in the socio-vocational society. Among these are suggestions to policy makers, administration, general public and tasks for self renewal.

a) To create a non-discriminatory psychological environment where disabled women are able to be fully integrated.

b) To promote self awareness of disabled women and self advocacy to achieve a reasonable quality of life and self realization.

c) To improve vocational rehabilitation programs and create further employment oppoertunities to fit the potential need of disabled women.

d) To strengthen basic education for healthy personality development and foster sound social functioning abilities.

e) To create a barrier free physical environment including housing for families and single women, business firms, transportation, public facilities, etc. to ensure disabled women have full access to social activities.

f) To increase attendants and/or caregivers qualitatively as well as quantitatively and make the dispatching system effectively centralized for the needs of disabled women.

g) To make use of mass communication media to enlighten the general public for disability integration and to develop social education for homebound disabled.

h) To gather, through effective research, the information needed for life by the disabled and to disseminate same through high technology and all possible communication methods.

i) To call for positive involvement of all levels of government to develop social policies reflecting the needs of disabled women.

j) To establish more community based rehabilitation facilities where early discovery of disabilities and preventive rehabilitation therapy are taught and practised.

3. Recent Social Movement Concerning the Expressed Proposals of the Disabled Women

Observing the trend of social forces in today's Japan, one will find several approaches which will benefit the disabled women directly and indirectly.

i) Methods to Cope with the Deep Rooted Prejudices to the Disadvantaged, Including Disabled Women.

A perpetual public education program to make the general public aware of the human rights of the disabled women, as well as a small group of historically discriminated citizens, is being carried out to foster better understanding of these minority groups. An example program is to be identified in "The Human Right Week Campaign in Kitakushu City". This is part of planned social education activities, such as a series of lectures and symposiums for all citizens to become involved. However, more important than such a local government initiated educational program can be a demonstration of the life and work of the disabled women in the everyday world. The homemaking, child rearing and work performance of disabled women, known by neighbors, can have a real impact and make ordinary people in the community aware of their needs and abilities.

ii) Taking Action for the Self Advocacy of Disabled Women

Promoting self help activities is essential in order order to meet the women's need to acquire: the ability to live independently; educational opportunity for sound personality developement; qualitative and quantitative development of attendants; and acquiring useful research information. After the International Year of Disabled Persons, leading Japanese disabled women who had experienced the American way of independent living programs, through the sponsorship of the Mr. Donut Scholarship Program, and their colleagues, worked to establish a women's corps of Disabled Peoples International (DPI) to acquire information of the international movement for self help activities. Some disabled women established a private association to recruit, train and dispatch professional attendants to families of the disabled

who need home assistance. Some women established a group home for the disabled and others for many years organized various self help associations to represent the disabled and to influence the political, administrative and academic fields to develop policies

and services for the disabled. Thus women's power gradually turned into formal self help organizations and gained social recognition even though the financial support systems in Japan were not yet developed.

iii) Recent Development of Support System to Rehabilitation NGO and Informal Self Help Activities

Today, the life expectancy of the Japanese is longer and Japan has a typical aging society. The elderly and the disabled include severely disabled women and there is much need for home care and attendant service in ordinary family life. In that service market some disabled women have made attendant services their occupation.
To promote the establishment and management of non-governmental service agencies so that some disabled women are able to be careworkers efficiently, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government provided a fund of twenty billion yen to the Tokyo Community Welfare Promotion Foundation, and let the Foundation use the interest of the fund to support such non-governmental care agencies,
The Tokyo Metropolitan Government have established such pilot funds as an incentive to set up home care, attendant, meal service, transportation service, etc. in the community and to influence the National Government and other municipalities.

iv) Development of Job Opportunities for the Disabled Women

From April 1988, the professional qualification of social workers has been controlled by the National Government based on the "Social Worker's and Care Worker's Law". To meet a national standard and pass the examination is not an easy task for disabled women, but once they obtain their license for human service professions their status will be soundly protected by law.
Many disabled women work in private companies, their employers usually have strong opinions and criticisms of them but they still employ the greatest number of disabled women and treat them as a normal work force.

Disabled women in this survey expressed their occupational preference and like to choose jobs through a selective employment method rather than be placed in generic production lines with the general workers.
Disabled women workers with a higher educational background tend to establish a unique work position and maintain the post for a long period. They find jobs in areas where they do not have to compete with the non-disabled, such as language, therapy, music and managerial skills.

v) Growing Demand to the Community Based Rehabilitation Agencies and Barrier Free City Environment

Community based rehabilitation (CBR) is not the only model for developing countries. In the developed part of the world an informal service network such as families and neighbors tend to lose the primary help functions. In an urban area each independent citizen needs to be treated equally by the community based facilities.
Disabled women need to have a multi-functional, accessible rehabilitation center in which they can enjoy the opportunity for recreation, sports, study, child care, etc.
As do normal citizens, the disabled women like to enjoy community living. Going out to shop, for recreation as well as to work. The community environment is for everybody.
The Japanese Government has a policy providing grants to municipalities to encourage them to make changes from the old environment to barrier free cities. Approved municipalities are called "Welfare Cities for the Disabled". The City Council for maintaining the function of the "Welfare Cities" should invite more disabled women delegates to their policy making processes.

In Japan, as this research discussed, disabled women still have many unsolved problems in achieving the social goal of "participation and equality". But in Japan, disabled women are not always oppressed people either. In spite of the hypothesis of ILO, women in Japan, in both rural and urban areas, rather equally enjoy the social life with little discrepancy in social status.

This survey found that the Japanese disabled women showed their potential abilities to live normally. Their positive opinions for future policies can be served as policy guidelines. It is hoped that the recommendations drawn from

the Japanese disabled women are to be shared with the disabled women in Asia and the world through the women's forum for self realization.

References

1. Kojima Y. Analytic Report on Socio-Vocational Integration of Disabled Women in Japan: A National Research Project for the ILO. Office of Social Rehabilitation Research, March 1988 153 pp
2. Kojima Y. "A Study of Social Integration of Disabled Women", Welfare for Persons with Disabilities Vol. 8, No. 2. Tokyo: Japanese Society for Rehabilitation of the Disabled, February 1988. p.2-9.